



Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs  
Erica L. Jeffries, Director



Illinois Department of Public Health  
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## **Legionnaires' Disease Outbreak at Illinois Veterans' Home-Quincy Update**

**Quincy, IL** - The Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs (IDVA) and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) today announced the deaths of a total of seven residents at the Illinois Veterans' Home-Quincy. The seven residents, all of whom had underlying medical conditions, were among the 39 individuals who had been diagnosed with Legionnaires' disease to date. Test results are currently pending for other residents.

"While saddened by the loss of our residents, having been at the Home and talking with the staff and our residents, I am impressed with their resilience and spirit," said IDVA Director Erica Jeffries. "We remain vigilant in monitoring our residents and we continue to follow the guidance of our interagency partners to implement remediation efforts across our Home. The safety and quality of care for our residents and staff are our primary concerns."

"We continue to work diligently with our public health and Veterans' Affairs partners to get immediate medical care to residents or staff at the Home who are experiencing respiratory illness," said IDPH Director Nirav D. Shah, M.D., J.D. "Unfortunately, we expect to see additional cases and possibly additional deaths because the incubation period for Legionnaires' disease can be up to two weeks, and because patients with underlying medical conditions are at increased risk of more severe illness."

On August 30, 2015, IDPH requested aid from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for epidemiology and environmental health assistance. Yesterday, three CDC Epidemic Intelligence Service Officers and one environmental health specialist arrived at the Illinois Veterans' Home – Quincy to work with IDVA and IDPH in investigating the Legionnaires' disease outbreak. CDC will also provide laboratory support from its headquarters in Atlanta, GA.

IDVA and IDPH continue to work closely with the Adams County Health Department to identify and mitigate possible sources of the *Legionella* bacteria. Due to the nature of the bacteria, test results can take up to two weeks. Public and environmental health officials are working closely with home staff to implement control measures at the home in order to prevent additional individuals from being infected.

Most cases of Legionnaires' disease can be traced to plumbing systems where conditions are favorable for *Legionella* growth, such as hot water tanks, cooling towers, and evaporative condensers of large air-conditioning systems. In order to be infected with the bacteria, a person must inhale contaminated water vapor. Legionnaires' disease cannot be transmitted person-to-person.

For more information about Legionnaires' disease, visit the [IDPH website](#).

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